



General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 January 2004
Original: English

Fifty-eighth session

Agenda item 85

**Comprehensive review of the whole question
of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects**

Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its report of 28 March 2003 (A/57/767, para. 205), the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in that report, covering those for which specific reports have not been requested. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request.



I. Introduction

1. This past year has seen significant progress in United Nations peacekeeping. In Kosovo, Georgia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, and Afghanistan, United Nations operations continued to facilitate complex and fragile peace processes. The missions in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste have continued to downsize according to plan. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations mission was expanded and its mandate strengthened and tentative progress towards stability is visible. New missions were launched in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. In fact, there was a notable increase in activities in 2003 and a further surge is expected in 2004, particularly in Africa. That will test the enhanced capacities for peacekeeping of the United Nations and we should be clear about what those capacities can do and what they cannot.

2. In my report to the Special Committee last year (A/57/711, para. 8), I identified, and the Special Committee subsequently welcomed, six areas worthy of special attention by Member States in 2003: integrating lessons learned and best practices into operational planning and coordination; developing and implementing comprehensive strategies for complex peacekeeping operations; enhancing rapid deployment; strengthening training; minimizing disciplinary problems; and strengthening regional peacekeeping capacities, particularly in Africa. As the present report will show, some progress has been made in all those areas, but much more must be done if we are to meet the main challenges ahead.

3. The challenges are therefore threefold: to meet the increase in demand for United Nations peacekeeping, particularly in Africa; to find ways to meet that demand by working with the multiplicity of today's peacekeeping partners; and to enhance the safety and security of all personnel serving in United Nations field missions.

4. The operational environments of many peacekeeping operations today are particularly threatening. For a peacekeeping mission to succeed in those environments, there must be a shared understanding of the need for a robust force, deployed and configured not only to be able to use force, but also to keep the initiative and, if challenged, to defend itself and its mandate.

5. In meeting those challenges, the Security Council, Member States and the Secretariat must answer some critical questions:

- Will Member States be able and willing to provide the troop, civilian police and other personnel contributions and material support that will be required for United Nations peacekeeping operations?
- In the light of current force and other commitments to United Nations peacekeeping and increased demands elsewhere, can the United Nations sustain the forthcoming surge in new and expanded missions or is there a danger of being spread too thinly?
- When should a peacekeeping operation be led by the United Nations and when should another organization or arrangement be assigned the responsibility for "robust" military peacekeeping?
- Will contributing countries provide troops ready, willing and able to operate in the challenging environments in which peacekeeping operations are deployed

today, including the possible use of force to protect civilians under imminent threat?

- Will countries reinforce the Organization's peacekeeping capacity by providing direct or over-the-horizon rapid response capability?

6. If peacekeeping is to remain an effective instrument for the United Nations, those involved — the Security Council, Member States and the Secretariat — must continue to cooperate closely to answer such questions.

II. Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

A. Security and safety of United Nations and associated personnel

7. The precarious security environments in which we operate today are a major challenge. We are faced with increased direct threats to civilian staff in United Nations missions. In Baghdad, the United Nations headquarters was devastated by a bombing that claimed the lives of 22 people, many of whom were among the most experienced of our colleagues in the field. At the same time, the military and police personnel provided by Member States are also vulnerable to attack and violence. The murder of two United Nations military observers from Jordan and Malawi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was particularly shocking.

8. The United Nations must give the utmost priority to enhancing the safety and security of those in the field who place their lives on the line in the service of the Organization, be they international and local civilian staff or military, police and other personnel contributed by Member States. The United Nations is reviewing its systems and procedures for safety and security both at Headquarters and in the field and must develop better capacities to prevent and manage threats by improving the mechanisms for gathering information in the field, as well as the ability to use that information effectively by developing it into useful intelligence. The importance of that capacity was recognized by Member States during the Fourth Committee session last October. I note, in that regard, the successful establishment of Joint Mission Analysis Cells in four missions.

9. The consultations undertaken in 2002 to clarify the lines of responsibility between the United Nations Security Coordinator and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have been put on hold pending the outcome of the overall evaluation of the United Nations security management system. Since March 2002, the chief of the Situation Centre has functioned as the Department's focal point for security, responsible for (i) liaising with the Security Coordinator on policy and procedural matters related to security management in peacekeeping operations; (ii) monitoring security developments in the field and reviewing the threat to peacekeeping personnel in areas of deployment; and (iii) making recommendations on coordinated actions to reduce the exposure of staff to security risks.

10. However, the increased threat to peacekeeping personnel in the field, combined with a need to conduct regular security assessments both at Headquarters and in the field, conduct security planning for new or expanding missions, implement a standard approach to security in the Department and missions and ensure compliance with security management policy and guidance, require enhanced

internal and external coordination and strengthening of the Department's security management capacities. I urge the Special Committee to support the request for a full-time security and safety focal point and the establishment of a mission security management unit within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to rationalize the Department's security policy, ensure its effective implementation on a day-to-day basis and enhance the response to any security emergency in the field.

11. The United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) was evacuated and terminated successfully. A lessons-learned study of the evacuation process produced important recommendations for current and future mission planning for evacuations, including the need to provide protection against the effects of the use of weapons of mass destruction in missions where there are such risks to peacekeepers.

B. Cooperation with troop-contributing countries

12. The level of cooperation and consultation by the Secretariat with troop and police-contributing countries has continued to grow.

13. In the planning of new or expanded missions as well as in their drawdown or termination, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has maintained regular and ongoing contact with existing or potential troop and police-contributing countries, in both formal and informal meetings. The frequent meetings held with troop contributors to UNIKOM prior to and during its evacuation and with potential troop and police contributors during the planning phase of the operations for Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia are good examples of the close relations maintained by the Department with troop and police-contributing countries.

14. As an additional effort to keep troop and police-contributing countries informed on United Nations field missions, in June 2003 the Department began a regular weekly audio-visual briefing for Member States, which will be continued if Member States find them useful.

15. Building on the success of the first course for New York-based military advisers, civilian police advisers and officials responsible for peacekeeping issues of troop and police-contributing countries, a shortened course will be offered in 2004.

C. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping

1. Mission planning

16. The broad objectives of improving the planning process of operations continue to be pursued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, particularly the early involvement of the mission leadership that will take on the task of mandate implementation in the field and the bringing together of the relevant United Nations departments, funds and programmes to foster coordinated and effective action.

17. Those goals have been reflected in the planning of new missions. In Liberia, my Special Representative was brought to Headquarters at the earliest opportunity to participate in the planning process before deploying to the field. That was found to be useful and, in addition to including the Force Commander, should be replicated in future missions. During the planning phase, the Special Representative chaired

meetings of an integrated mission task force convened to share information on planning activities. Further revisions to the integrated mission task force concept will reflect the lessons learned and best practices of that experience and lead to improved efficacy in coordinating the planning of field missions by the relevant actors. The early deployment of multidisciplinary assessment missions made a significant contribution to the level of integration in the planning of the mission.

18. Although the narrow window for planning and deploying the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was used to maximum effect, certain conditions, namely the redeployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) battalions, will not be replicated in other situations. Particularly important to the planning process of UNMIL were the early and intensive consultations that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations held with troop and police-contributing countries.

19. A review of the full integrated planning process has been undertaken and a draft template for integrated mission planning has been finalized and discussions within the Secretariat have begun on its broader application. The template will provide a sequential, integrated planning framework both for new missions and new phases of existing missions. It will be applied in the planning of a potential peacekeeping operation in the Sudan and adjusted on the basis of that experience. Given the likely planning and deployment requirements in the first half of 2004, getting that process right will be critical.

2. Rapid deployment

20. The report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations recommended measures to support the goal of rapid deployment within 30 days for traditional missions and 90 days for complex peacekeeping operations. Fully deploying a complex peacekeeping operation within that timeline seems to be increasingly challenging. As the case of UNMIL has shown, full deployment within the envisaged 90 days is a difficult goal to attain. While the planning and support capabilities are largely in place at Headquarters and at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, rapid deployment ultimately depends on the timely arrival of well-trained and equipped troops and police in the field. Although many Member States continue to offer the United Nations their men and women for service in United Nations peacekeeping, most face formidable financial and logistical barriers to deploy rapidly.

21. Following a review of procedures to give effect to pre-mandate commitment authority, that mechanism was used successfully to prepare for UNMIL. Further revisions to the mechanism, however, may be required to take into account some of the difficulties experienced, including the high cost of procuring goods and services with very short lead times, which quickly uses up the allotted commitment authority.

22. The "just-in-time" pre-deployment training of headquarters staff contributed significantly to the effective deployment of the missions to Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. In both cases, that was made possible by the stopgap deployment of staff for interim headquarters by the Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade.

23. Further effort is required to improve rapid deployment. In particular, the Special Committee could consider how to improve all aspects of pre-mandate operational preparedness with the goal of truncating preparation timelines. The start-

up phases of forthcoming missions will benefit from the results of a lessons-learned study that is being carried out of the start-up phase of UNMIL.

(a) Personnel

24. The United Nations Standby Arrangements System will now consist of the rapid deployment level for formed units, the on-call list for trained and experienced individuals, particularly headquarters staff officers, and a mechanism to link troops from one Member State to equipment and other support from other Member States or regional entities. Jordan and Uruguay have joined the rapid deployment level. As far as formed units are concerned, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will give priority to the rapid deployment level, both to get the most capable forces available and as a mechanism to identify and meet shortfalls in potential contributors. In particular, key force multipliers that enhance the effectiveness of a United Nations operation and better ensure troop security will be sought. Given the lack of response to repeated calls for logistics-enabling capacities and strategic mobility assets and the fact that those capabilities are outsourced by many Member States, the Secretariat, as a norm, will seek to meet its requirements in those areas through the use of contractors. Logistics support assets will only be requested from Member States when operational requirements demand that they be military personnel.

25. With regard to military and police on-call lists, results have been mixed. On 31 December 2003, 39 Member States had nominated a total of 668 personnel to fill the 147 positions on the military on-call list. Other Member States have indicated they will nominate qualified personnel for positions as and when the need arises. While that system has been of some use in establishing the United Nations missions in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, we have seen an inability to meet response times, as well as a lack of familiarity with United Nations processes and procedures. On the other hand, the civilian police roster has received very few submissions. Only nine countries so far have committed personnel to that list. It is of concern to the Secretariat that, as the demand for civilian police officers in United Nations peacekeeping operations is increasing, the mechanisms established to deploy rapidly and effectively to the field are not utilized.

26. With regard to the rapid deployment of civilian personnel, the rapid deployment team mechanism has been utilized to place experienced personnel on the ground quickly for the start-up of a mission. Since its establishment, 44 Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff have been deployed as part of the rapid deployment team mechanism, mostly in UNMIL. The mission support component of UNMIL was established quickly through the use of rapid deployment team personnel. The Department is undergoing a review of the first cycle of the mechanism.

(b) Materiel readiness

27. The UNMIL deployment timeline could not have been met without the strategic deployment stocks and support from UNAMSIL. Strategic deployment stocks have proved to be beneficial both in increasing the speed of deployment and in helping to overcome the equipment shortfalls of troop-contributing countries. For example, approximately \$20 million worth of assets were moved from the United Nations Logistics Base to support the deployment of UNMIL. Some of that

equipment was used to support the re-hatted forces of the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Liberia.

28. The planning assumptions for the strategic deployment stocks concept as originally proposed in my report of 14 March 2002 (A/56/870) were based on the mission profiles of a traditional as well as a complex mission. However, Member States decided to stock requirements for only one complex mission of up to 10,000 troops. The strategic deployment stocks are now severely depleted in many asset areas and work is under way to develop a funding mechanism that will enable the rapid replenishment of the stocks earmarked for or issued to a mission. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is reviewing the strategic deployment stocks equipment lists and holding levels in the light of our experience during the UNMIL deployment. Rapid replenishment is essential if we are to meet the likely demands and tempo of potential future operations, particularly when deploying multiple new missions simultaneously.

29. In addition to utilizing strategic deployment stocks, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has also sought to overcome equipment shortfalls faced by troop-contributing countries through the facilitation of bilateral arrangements, including through the United Nations Standby Arrangements System. In UNAMSIL, a Member State provides armoured personnel carriers and heavy cargo trucks, training in their operation and first line repair and maintenance requirements for other contingents. A similar bilateral arrangement is currently being negotiated for UNMIL.

(c) Funding

30. More flexible funding mechanisms for sustaining operational readiness must be developed. At the "partners in peacekeeping" conference, held in Sierra Leone in March 2003, to be followed up in 2005, the Secretariat introduced the concept of "fast cash". The goal of that arrangement is to provide a one-time reimbursement to troop-contributing countries for their troops and equipment in new or expanded missions. The prerequisite to payment is the signing of a memorandum of understanding and payment is limited to reimbursement for the first two months upon receipt of verification reports. To date, only one country has requested reimbursement under that arrangement.

3. Civilian police

31. As peacekeeping operations have become more complex, the role of civilian police has continued to evolve. For example, UNMIL is addressing the criminal justice chain in a comprehensive manner and two formed police units have been deployed in support of local police capacity. While the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has undertaken efforts to meet the evolving and growing needs of current and new missions, its limited capacity should be reassessed in the light of the current and projected requirements to identify and deploy civilian police officers with specialized skills and expertise.

32. In 2003 seven new countries joined the ranks of police contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations. However, I remain concerned as to how the United Nations will adequately meet the needs for specialized civilian police officers in existing and anticipated missions in view of the shortfalls of recent

experience. Of particular concern is the crucial need for qualified francophone civilian police officers as well as qualified female police officers.

33. While I recognize the constraints on Member States regarding the deployment of civilian police, Member States are encouraged to consider developing mechanisms that would create national, skill-based pools of civilian police advisers, mentors, trainers, reform and restructuring specialists and specialized crimes, judicial and correctional experts, including the possibility of providing United Nations peacekeeping operations with self-contained units for specialized functions. Member States are further encouraged to consider developing, within their own national police or security structures, a dedicated section of specialists, committed to the enhancement of peacekeeping police capacity.

34. I also urge Member States to take further steps to enhance the pre-selection and training of civilian police officers and to commit strongly to their operational preparedness. The assignment of civilian police advisers to some permanent missions has resulted in more effective cooperation between the Secretariat and police-contributing countries on issues of mutual interest. I encourage other Member States to consider following that example.

4. Mine action

35. In his statement of 19 November 2003 (S/PRST/2003/22), the President of the Security Council said the Council recognizes the long-term consequences of landmines and unexploded ordnance for durable peace, security and development and welcomes the role of the United Nations Mine Action Service in ensuring the coordination of mine action throughout the United Nations system and the provision of support to multidimensional peace operations. Moreover, the Council calls upon troop-contributing countries to continue to train selected personnel to demine in accordance with international mine action standards.

36. A study entitled the *Role of the Military in Mine Action*, published by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in October 2003, provides valuable information and guidance relating to the use of both national military forces and visiting military contingents in mine action.

37. The United Nations Mine Action Rapid Response Plan was implemented for the first time in Iraq. A fact-finding team and a coordination team were deployed and external organizations were contracted to carry out an emergency survey, clearance operations, mine risk education and landmine safety training. The experience gained in that operation is being reviewed to identify lessons learned and will be used to revise the Rapid Response Plan accordingly.

38. Further work has been completed to coordinate mine action training and mine risk education materials and procedures used by troop-contributing countries and relevant United Nations agencies. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations included the landmine and unexploded ordnance safety materials developed by the United Nations Mine Action Service in the Standardized Generic Training Modules, Level 1. The training package was sent to all Member States, training centres and peacekeeping missions in September 2003.

39. Mine action can play an important role in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts. In Afghanistan mine action is providing employment opportunities within the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

That experience may be replicated in other such programmes currently being planned.

40. The incorporation of mine action into the mandates and personnel planning for peacekeeping operations, as appropriate, is critical. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations will ensure that mine action staff are included in integrated mission task forces and mission planning assessment missions whenever the situation requires.

5. Comprehensive strategies for complex peacekeeping operations

(a) Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

41. The disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme in Liberia has been launched and will be a critical test of the ability of UNMIL to implement its mandate. The inclusion in the Mission's budget of the costs of early reintegration of ex-combatants, from the outset, is an important model to follow to ensure the continuity of the programme. However, the programme is facing challenges related to security and the disarmament process. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is working closely with UNMIL to address the difficulties faced in disarming the fighters and reintegrating them into their communities.

42. With the recruitment of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration adviser, the Department is now in a position to develop operational modalities (policy guidelines, standard operating procedures and mutually agreed divisions of labour) for early preparation and planning, consistent implementation and effective management of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in peacekeeping missions. In order to support the Department's capacity in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, particularly in the planning of new missions, additional resources will be needed.

43. The major strategic challenge in the year ahead for our approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is the need to develop workable arrangements for United Nations system-wide coordination of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration policy and strategy development. That would also provide opportunities for other entities, including the Bretton Woods institutions, Member States and NGOs, to contribute to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration planning and implementation processes.

(b) Rule of law

44. Our recent experience in post-conflict societies has demonstrated that sustainable peace cannot be built in the absence of the rule of law and United Nations peacekeeping operations continue to expend efforts and resources on restoration of the rule of law.

45. In order for our peacekeeping operations to provide effective support to domestic police, judicial and corrections systems and promote respect for human rights, they must be provided with specific mandates, strategic planning and adequate resources and must involve inter-agency partnerships. The creation of the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit within the Civilian Police Division in March 2003 has significantly enhanced the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in that regard.

46. The dialogue with Member States has continued on those issues, including the Security Council deliberations on justice and the rule of law, consultations with the Working Group of the Special Committee in June 2003, as well as other formal and informal consultations throughout the year.

47. The Secretariat has also implemented a number of the recommendations of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Task Force, including those regarding consultations with Member States, the development of an active rule of law focal point network and some aspects relating to mission planning. Consultations with Member States concerning judicial and prison system reform have been, and will continue to be, a key aspect of the Department's approach, as will our emphasis on partnerships with governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations and coordination in the field.

48. While the rule of law focal point network is a useful tool for information sharing, the network alone cannot make up for the limited resources in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on those issues. Thus, additional resources would be needed to expand the Department's ability to support existing missions on justice and corrections issues, develop the existing collection of reports and guidelines, support Member States' training initiatives, develop databases of external entities and individual experts and implement other Task Force recommendations.

49. As partnership is essential, I urge Member States to provide ongoing support to those issues by continuing to: (i) consider and discuss the importance of justice reform efforts to post-conflict peace and security; (ii) contribute financial and other resources through United Nations trust funds, partnership arrangements or otherwise, to help host countries of peace operations develop their justice institutions; (iii) implement bilateral programmes to strengthen host-country justice institutions in close coordination with the United Nations mission; (iv) in coordination with the Secretariat, develop bilateral or multilateral programmes to train justice and corrections experts for potential deployment to peace operations; and (v) support the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in enhancing its capacity in the justice and corrections areas as outlined above. Through such joint efforts, we will together be much better poised to support law and order, and lasting peace and security, in post-conflict settings.

(c) Security sector reform

50. The trend of United Nations involvement in security sector reform has continued, most recently in the mission in Liberia. There is clear recognition that that effort is a component critical to sustainable peace and stability.

51. While the bulk of support will depend on the voluntary contributions of Member States to coherent programmes, there is a clear role for the United Nations. Further consideration is required of what that role entails. It could include development of international norms, advocacy, facilitation of coherent international support for specific programmes and provision of overall impartial programme advice.

6. Quick impact projects

52. It is widely recognized that small-scale and rapidly disbursed quick impact projects can serve to build and sustain confidence and support for peacekeeping operations, indeed, to offer a certain protection to missions, by addressing the immediate needs of local communities in areas where United Nations operations are deployed. In many cases consultations with local authorities, other United Nations agencies and local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have taken place to select appropriate projects, avoid duplication of efforts and develop synergies between projects and programmes.

53. Several multidimensional peacekeeping missions have dedicated review committees and programme officers to facilitate the selection, implementation and evaluation of quick impact projects. Similarly, provisions for such projects are included in the 2003/04 assessed budgets of some missions, while others use trust funds financed by donor Governments. The continued financing of quick impact projects in multidimensional peacekeeping operations requires that each mission's budget include, from the beginning and beyond the first year, a budget line for such projects, supplemented by a trust fund as soon as funding from Member States becomes available, as well as better integration with developmental planning of other United Nations agencies and international and local NGOs.

7. Public information

54. Public information has a dual role to play in enabling peacekeeping operations. The first, which is relatively well developed, provides vital support to current peacekeeping missions in the execution of their mandates. Recent improvements in that area of activity include the first-time deployment of public information assets to Liberia from the strategic deployment stock to allow early start-up of radio broadcasting and other public information activities. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Radio Okapi has gained an audience of some 20 million listeners since it began broadcasting two years ago and, by establishing the only national radio network, is contributing to efforts to unite the country after years of bitter conflict.

55. However, I am concerned that the lack of expertise at both Headquarters and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi to plan and support the technical aspects of public information components in new peacekeeping operations will, unless addressed, weaken the Organization's ability to use public information effectively in the critical start-up phase of anticipated peacekeeping missions.

56. The second role of public information in the area of peacekeeping is more global. United Nations peacekeeping has evolved rapidly over the past few years. Public perceptions of peacekeeping have, however, lagged behind the new realities and successes of multidimensional, complex peacekeeping operations, especially in Africa, where further demand for United Nations peacekeeping is already evident. I am concerned that this "information gap" will negatively affect the perception of United Nations peacekeeping operations and its ability to engage potential troop and police contributors for future operations.

57. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has within the last year developed a communications strategy aimed at creating a "culture of communications" within the Department and providing it with the ability to engage more effectively with its many stakeholders. Existing resources within the

Department are, however, insufficient to take the needed measures required to implement that communications strategy and strengthen public information outreach for United Nations peacekeeping as a whole. In addition to supporting public information in current operations, planning for new missions and creating long-term information products, the Department's only officer with public information responsibilities is fully engaged managing media relations for it. The Department, while making considerable progress in other areas, clearly still suffers a resource deficit in the area of global outreach, internal communications and the provision of technical support mentioned earlier, which I urge Member States to address.

58. I also note that little progress has been made in the creation of a Department of Peacekeeping Operations web site in six official language versions and that developing that important communications tool has too been stymied by a lack of resources.

8. Training

59. In June 2003 the Department of Peacekeeping Operations established a training advisory group to develop an integrated training policy and strategy and to coordinate the training activities of its military, civilian police and civilian components. In order to evaluate and monitor the results of peacekeeping training, the Department is also developing an evaluation methodology and monitoring system, which will enhance peacekeeping training efficiency and effectiveness.

60. The Standardized Generic Training Modules, Level 1, which were developed with extensive consultation and support from Member States and national and regional peacekeeping centres, are now nearing finalization. The Department has commenced with the development work for Levels 2 and 3 and will consult and seek support, as before, from Member States and other partners, including regional entities. The standardized training guidance was provided to Member States through nine United Nations Training Assistance Teams courses during the course of 2003.

61. A new focus has been placed on mission training, particularly on pre-deployment training. The military component of the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), as well as the force headquarters for UNMIL, underwent pre-deployment training. Such training was also conducted for contingents. Despite some problems with staff officers being available in a timely manner, the training was very effective and the Department intends to continue with the practice in future. It also successfully conducted a military on-call list training course in Hungary in May 2003, which contributed eight key staff for MINUCI.

62. The establishment of 10 mission training cells in the field missions and training focal points in others extends the coordination mechanism on training issues to the field, with a view to establishing integrated mission training cells in all United Nations peacekeeping operations.

63. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has also been developing a new process for the recognition of United Nations peacekeeping training courses for military and for civil police delivered by Member States. Recognition of courses will ensure the rapid adoption of United Nations standardized training material, will act as a catalyst for emerging troop-contributing countries and will enable the Department to seek places for students on Member State recognized courses.

64. Furthermore, the Department has enhanced the management and conduct of civilian training in field missions. During the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003, 1,080 courses were conducted in field missions in issues ranging from aviation safety to basic English, HIV/AIDS awareness and management techniques. In total, 27,000 participants attended training courses ranging in length from half a day to four weeks. In 2004 a training strategy for civilian staff will be developed in harmony with other training efforts within the Department.

9. Lessons learned and implementation of best practices

65. The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit effectively became operational in 2003 and is pursuing an extensive programme of work focused on policy development, lessons learned, including "real time" problem solving, and knowledge management.

66. In the area of knowledge management, a best practices online database is in an advanced phase of development and will be launched early in 2004. That virtual library will hold key documents in peacekeeping and provide a resource for experience, guidance and best practices in the planning, conduct and management of peacekeeping missions.

67. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is in the process of establishing a field network of focal points to provide missions with an in-house best practices capacity as well as to allow for the sharing of experience with Headquarters and among missions. The web site and database will provide the means by which to connect the focal points and to collect best practices from the field. A best practices coordination officer has now been recruited by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and focal points will be established in other missions.

10. Conduct and disciplinary issues

68. The proper conduct and behaviour of peacekeeping personnel continues to be a priority for the Organization. Misconduct and even perceptions of impropriety have a deleterious effect on the image of the mission and the United Nations as a whole and may impede the implementation of a mission's mandate. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has continued its proactive approach to raising awareness of the standards of conduct expected of all United Nations personnel, preventing misconduct by peacekeeping personnel and taking swift and resolute action when misconduct occurs. The strategy has included the promulgation of clear disciplinary procedures for implementation by all heads of mission, greater emphasis on preventing misconduct through pre-deployment and in-mission training and improved monitoring of conduct and behaviour.

69. The Department has developed generic training modules on the standards of conduct, particularly the Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets, which are available to all contributing countries to facilitate pre-deployment preparedness of their personnel. In addition, mission training cells provide ongoing training on conduct and behaviour and the disciplinary process.

70. With the promulgation in October 2003 of the Secretary-General's bulletin entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been taking steps to implement the bulletin in coordination with the United Nations system by

working towards ensuring that each mission has an active strategy to prevent and respond to the problem of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by and of peacekeeping personnel. Training on standards of conduct extends to all field personnel and a web-based training module is being developed on the International Civil Service Commission standards of conduct and the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. That module will be easily accessible to all field personnel.

71. Personnel contributed for service with the United Nations must be fully aware of their responsibilities and obligations where their personal conduct is concerned and of the consequences of misconduct. In situations where peacekeeping personnel break the law, the head of mission has a duty and obligation of mutual assistance to the local authorities to see that justice is served. I urge personnel-contributing countries to support fully our combined efforts to ensure that the individual responsible is brought to justice swiftly. To facilitate appropriate legal steps by contributing national authorities, the Department will cooperate closely with the relevant authorities. I again urge all contributing States to take speedy disciplinary action and, if necessary, punitive measures and to keep the Department informed of the steps taken.

72. To be truly effective, the Department's efforts in that area need time and additional resources. To improve notification and monitoring of conduct in field missions, the Department is proposing that the post of Personnel Conduct Officer, to act as the mission's ombudsman, be created in each field mission.

11. Gender and peacekeeping

73. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is strengthening its ability to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2002/1154) by including gender expertise in planning processes for peacekeeping missions, developing guidelines on gender-sensitive reporting and including gender expertise in the concepts of operation of new missions. At present, of 10 peacekeeping operations considered to be multidimensional, a total of seven have existing or planned gender expertise.

74. The Department is currently developing a number of practical field manuals on gender mainstreaming. The gender resource package is in the final stages of production and will provide peacekeeping personnel with a practical field guide to gender issues in a wide range of peacekeeping activities. In addition, the Department is developing a field manual on gender issues for middle-ranking military commanders and guidelines on gender issues in mine action.

75. The Department's gender experts are being involved in the planning stages of peacekeeping missions. At Headquarters, that has entailed the participation of the Department's Gender Adviser in planning sessions on Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and the Sudan. In the field, that has led to the participation of gender experts in assessment missions.

76. In the coming year, the Department will focus on establishing procedures for gender mainstreaming. That includes developing an organizational action plan for implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and establishing a network of gender focal points in missions.

77. The assistance of Member States is needed in several areas. First, I am concerned about the low representation of women in peacekeeping operations and would encourage the submission of more female candidates for senior civilian appointments and for military and civilian police positions at all levels. Secondly, I look to Member States to take into account Council resolution 1325 (2000) in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as well as to provide adequate resources for gender expertise in all multidimensional peacekeeping operations.

12. Children and peacekeeping

78. As I reported to the General Assembly and the Security Council (A/58/546-S/2003/1053), United Nations peacekeeping missions have made progress in the implementation of Council resolution 1460 (2003). Specifically, 10 Child Protection Advisers are currently working with MONUC and two are working with UNAMSIL. An additional two posts have been created and approved for UNAMIL and one position for MINUCI. Child Protection Advisers call upon all parties to armed conflicts to ensure the protection of children's rights and highlight the importance of including special provisions for the protection of children and women in the mandates of peace operations. Advisers also advocate the inclusion of children's rights and protection concerns on the agendas of United Nations coordination mechanisms, international and local NGOs and the international donor community and assist the head of mission to identify resources or technical support for child-conscious programmes.

79. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Save the Children, developed a training manual entitled "Child Protection Training for United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel". That manual, which is in the final stages of production, is intended for use during induction training of all mission personnel.

13. HIV/AIDS

80. Conflict and post-conflict areas are considered high-risk environments for the transmission of HIV. The response of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to that devastating epidemic has been greatly strengthened by technical and advisory support from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The Department has also collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and UNICEF in the design and implementation of programmes. To assist our initiatives, an HIV/AIDS and Peacekeeping Trust Fund, initially based on funds raised by UNAIDS, has been established.

81. In January 2003 an HIV/AIDS policy adviser, sponsored by UNAIDS, was placed in the Department to develop policy and assist the standardization of awareness and prevention programmes in United Nations peacekeeping missions. That position is funded until December 2004, after which new resources will need to be secured. There are currently HIV/AIDS policy advisers in four of the major peacekeeping operations — in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Timor-Leste, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Sierra Leone — and a fifth is being recruited for Liberia. It is my intention to deploy HIV/AIDS policy advisers in all major peacekeeping operations. There are HIV/AIDS focal points in a further six missions and others are being identified for the remaining operations. A workshop in early 2004 will bring

all those key personnel together to ensure a strong and consistent approach in peacekeeping missions. The Department has also developed a pre-deployment training module on HIV/AIDS and is reviewing and updating other training and awareness material. I urge Member States to mainstream HIV/AIDS awareness in military training.

82. The Department's policy on HIV testing for uniformed peacekeepers is being finalized. In line with Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) and current medical and human rights guidelines, the Secretariat strongly supports a policy of voluntary confidential counselling and testing both before and after deployment in the field. A crucial component of our programme for this year and next is the establishment of voluntary confidential counselling and testing facilities in more peacekeeping missions. The training of mission HIV counsellors will be continued and increased in 2004. In order to measure the impact of its efforts and hone its interventions, the Department is developing monitoring and evaluation systems, using tools such as a "knowledge, attitude and practice" survey. Ultimately, efforts seek not only to reduce the risk of HIV transmission but also to capitalize on the positive potential of both uniformed and civilian peacekeepers as "agents of change".

14. Cooperation with regional arrangements

(a) General

83. In 2003 the United Nations continued to develop its cooperation with a number of regional organizations in support of United Nations peacekeeping. The focus of that cooperation has been both on seeking direct support to the United Nations by deploying before, alongside or after a United Nations operation, as well as on the long-term enhancement of the capacity for peacekeeping of regional and subregional organizations, particularly in Africa.

84. I believe we are seeing positive developments towards the creation of strategic partnerships to meet the peacekeeping challenges of today, which for the United Nations are overwhelmingly in Africa. The deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation can now be envisaged as part of a series of efforts that take advantage of the comparative strengths of different organizations. In Côte d'Ivoire, the additional rapid reaction capabilities of the French operation "Licorne" reinforce the effectiveness of the force deployed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and MINUCI. For its part, the United Nations provided support to ECOWAS in the development of support plans and cost estimates for the establishment of its force.

85. In Liberia, the need for a rapid deployment before a United Nations peacekeeping operation could take over was met by an ECOWAS force. The United Nations and ECOWAS worked together to ensure the transportation and interoperability of the ECOWAS force in Liberia, which was subsequently re-hatted. Despite some difficulties regarding capacity, particularly in the areas of coherence, equipment and logistics sustainability, that ensured continuity.

86. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a European Union-led force was deployed in Bunia for 90 days, reducing ethnic fighting in that town and allowing time for the mandate and the force of MONUC to be restructured in order to address the security needs of the United Nations-supported peace process.

87. I note that rapid response capabilities for peacekeeping operations have been established, or are under development, in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union and the African Union. The very rapid deployment targets of some of those forces could contribute significantly to United Nations peace and security objectives, particularly if they could remain in areas of operation for the length of time needed for the United Nations to deploy, or as the situation requires.

88. When a robust force is used to bridge the gap before the deployment of a United Nations operation, it is useful to follow the successful model employed in the former East Timor in 1999 when core elements of the Australian-led International Force in East Timor remained in-theatre and re-hatted as Blue Helmets. That enabled a smooth transition to a robust and credible United Nations force and ensured the continuity of the mission.

89. In February 2003, the African Union deployed the African Mission in Burundi to facilitate the continuing implementation of the ceasefire agreements, although financial constraints impeded the deployment of that mission to full strength. The African Union is making considerable efforts to enhance its peacekeeping capacities and missions such as the one in Burundi must receive adequate and sustained international assistance.

90. I also note the development by the European Union of the African Peace Facility to fund peace support and peacekeeping operations conducted by African regional organizations. That kind of initiative is important to enhance the capability of the African Union and African regional organizations to address conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa.

91. Elsewhere, the United Nations mission in Georgia continued to work closely with the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping force to monitor and verify the implementation of the ceasefire and separation of forces agreement and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the protection and promotion of human rights in Abkhazia, Georgia. In Kosovo, the United Nations, the European Union and OSCE continued to coordinate their activities in an integrated manner, cooperating effectively with the NATO-led international security force. In Afghanistan, the United Nations mission continued to cooperate with the coalition forces as well as the International Security Assistance Force to allow for the extension of the Government's authority throughout the country and the pursuit of the Bonn process.

92. If we are to assure an adequate response to the needs of post-conflict situations, I welcome all those developments. The Secretariat is working closely with regional entities to identify capabilities that the United Nations requires for its missions as well as to develop further modalities of cooperation to meet the overall demands of peacekeeping, particularly in Africa. For example, coherent and robust over-the-horizon rapid response capability is required in a number of situations. Regional entities may be in a position to respond to those needs.

(b) Enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity

93. Later this year I will report comprehensively on the enhancement of Africa's peacekeeping capacity, both in terms of support to activities conducted by regional

or subregional organizations and assistance that enhances the capacity of Member States to contribute.

94. As Africa develops its own capabilities for peacekeeping, the United Nations continued in 2003 to support those initiatives in a number of ways and to develop mechanisms in support of the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity. The Secretariat continued to work closely with the African Union to coordinate assistance in finalizing the proposals for the establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee called for in the African Union Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations assisted the Union in establishing the African Union situation room procedures for handling emergency and crisis situations and in improving its audio, video and teleconferencing facilities. The United Nations is also strengthening cooperation with bilateral donors and other organizations that are involved in strengthening African peacekeeping capacity to ensure that regional efforts adhere to United Nations standards of peacekeeping.

95. The concept of the subregional brigades under consideration as part of the African Standby Force is aimed at providing a rapid presence while the United Nations deploys or while the African Union seeks the deployment of a United Nations mission. Properly resourced, that can be very useful in the immediate aftermath of a peace agreement. In the near to medium term, considerable effort will be required to permit those brigades to deploy into volatile situations requiring highly mobile robust forces. For that reason, while focused efforts to strengthen African peacekeeping capacities should continue and be increased, there will be a continuing need for the operational commitment in Africa of highly capable forces from other regions, including to missions under United Nations command.

15. Financial and procurement issues

96. There have been significant improvements in the conclusion of memorandums of understanding between the United Nations and troop-contributing countries. Stressing the importance, during negotiations, of signing a memorandum of understanding has led to a 50 per cent reduction in the average amount of time for a memorandum of understanding to be signed by Member States. Further efforts are being made to expedite that process. Signature of memorandums of understanding is required for the processing of claims as well as for other arrangements such as "fast cash".

97. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continues to support the work of the 2004 Working Group on Contingent-owned Equipment and has proposed that the Working Group, at its next meeting, consider establishing a mechanism to allow for a more regular review of the administrative aspects of the contingent-owned equipment system in addition to the mandated triennial review of reimbursement rates.

98. A complete review of United Nations ration scales has been undertaken, following a suggestion made during the partners in peacekeeping conference that took place in March 2003 in Sierra Leone.

99. Efforts to increase procurement from developing countries, least developed countries and economies in transition have led to 48 per cent of procurements in

2002 emanating from those countries. That percentage has been steadily rising since 1999.

III. Observations

100. The past year has been an eventful one in peacekeeping, with yet another significant surge of activity. It has also confirmed that our greatest challenges are in Africa. The great majority of United Nations peacekeepers are deployed in Africa and that tendency will continue. That intensification of activity largely reflects the welcome new opportunities for peace created in Africa, by Africans, whose home-grown initiatives deserve to be nurtured and sustained. The international community must do more to ensure that those opportunities to bring peace are not lost.

101. The past year was also one marked by tragedy. Sadly, we lost yet more lives in the service of peace. To honour their sacrifice and to meet our responsibilities to those who continue to risk their lives in the field, the United Nations, its Member States and the Secretariat must do much more to enhance their safety and security.

102. Meeting those challenges will not be easy and will require the continued collaborative efforts of Member States, the Security Council and the Secretariat to make United Nations peacekeeping the effective instrument it can be in helping to end violent conflict and build peace where it is most needed.